PROCEEDINGS OF THE

MYSORE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

DASARA SESSION, OCTOBER 1920.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION.

PART I.

GENERAL SUBJECTS.

FINANCIAL.

(*Nos. 1 to 6.*)

SUBJECT No. 1.

Retrenchment in all Departments of the State.

Messrs. (1) B. N. Vijaya Deva, Vokkaligara Sangha, Bangalore.
(2) C. Rasul Khan, Anjuman-e-Islamia, Chikmagalur.

Mr. Vijaya Deva.—It is evident from the proceedings of the Legislative Council meetings and from the Dewan's Address before this Assembly that the question of retrenchment of expenditure is under the active consideration of the Finance Committee and that something will be done in the matter. I shall not therefore go much into the details of the subject but will content myself with referring to some general principles.

Dewan.—Your representatives are both in the Legislative Council and on the Finance Committee and discussions are now going on in the Finance Committee to suggest suitable measures of retrenchment. Where is the necessity to discuss the subject in this Assembly to-day?

Mr. Vijaya Deva.—I am only dealing with some general principles. I am anxious that the Government should carry out retrenchments as far as possible without impairing the efficiency of Departments. It is necessary that Government should not be actuated by the sole idea of only University Degrees in the determination of efficiency. General intelligence and capacity to do a particular work should be the criterion for judging efficiency. There are many officers with high degrees in several departments but no regard is paid to competency. In the case of Shekdars and Excise Inspectors, for instance, there is no use of insisting upon University Degrees. In the name of efficiency,

a high standard of University qualifications is prescribed in many departments. This is, in my opinion, a wrong principle. Real efficiency should carry more weight irrespective of University Degrees. A lot of expenditure is incurred in the Geological and Forest Departments. Unnecessary expenditure must be put a stop to but without impairing the efficiency of the Departments as judged by the above principle. Some departments, such as Education, require more expenditure. We should not grudge it, as it is calculated to bring intelligence and knowledge to us. Similarly, for obvious reasons, the Medical Department should not be subjected to large retrenchments.

Dewan.—We do not lay hard and fast rules in regard to University qualifications for all appointments such as those mentioned by you.

Mr. H. Krishna Sastri.—The Dewan was pleased to say that, as the subject of retrenchment was under the active consideration of the Finance Committee, no useful purpose is served by discussing it here at this stage. This is an important subject which exercises the minds of most people. It looks as if expenditure is growing inordinately and unless some steps are taken immediately to curtail it, it may grow to much larger proportions. Yesterday, the Dewan said that a sum of about 24 lakhs would be spent on giving increases to the pay of officials. There is no doubt that this expenditure is quite necessary. But there is room for retrenchment in other directions. Our only concern is that, if expenditure grows like this, it is just possible that further taxes will be imposed to meet such expenditure. That is the reason why we consider it necessary to sound a note of warning beforehand.

Retrenchment may be effected by the combination of offices. Departmental establishments may be reduced and no new appointments created. While we have to spend more on one department, we have to see how much we can get by reducing expenditure in other departments. Above all, we ought to see that expenditure does not go beyond the income of the State.

Retrenchments should commence from the top and not from the bottom. In the Dewan's Address to this Assembly, it was stated that an Income-tax Department will be newly constituted but that instead of creating a new officer at its head, the department will be tacked on to the Excise Commissioner. While we welcome the principle of such a combination of Departments, we wish to point out that it is doubtful

if the Income-tax Department can be appropriately combined with the Excise Department as it has ordinarily nothing to do with Excise. The Income-tax Department is primarily concerned with accounts and pecuniary transactions of commerce and it is but right that the Income-tax and Commerce Departments should be combined under one whole-time officer. The Excise Department is more allied to the Revenue Department and may be more usefully combined with the latter department. This arrangement will surely tend to a reduction of expenditure.

Then again, there is much scope for retrenchment in the Public Works Department. There are more officers in the department than are really necessary. For instance, the number of Superintending Engineers is much larger now than it was some years ago. The establishment charges should be reduced and if possible, a minimum should be prescribed for such charges as in Madras.

Dewan.—Noted.

Mr. K. T. Seshaiya.—Retrenchment comprises two broad divisions, *viz.*, (1) superfluous expenditure should be curtailed; and (2) there should be adequate return for the expenditure incurred. The general retrenchment policy of the State should be judged by the above standards which should be the determining factors.

Let us take, for instance, the Forest Department. It brings in a revenue of as much as 45 lakhs of rupees which is still bound to increase. We have also to incur a large expenditure on the maintenance of the department. But what is the return that we are getting for this expenditure? The people have to suffer any amount of trouble on account of the fuel difficulty which the department is not able to effectively remedy. The income is there, the expenditure is there, but people get no adequate return for the expenditure.

Then again, formerly, the Jamabandy Officers were conversant with the people and moved with them sympathetically. But now, the number of such officers is increased, the expenditure is enormous and the officers are scarcely in touch with the people, with the result that their grievances are not redressed and they do not receive sympathetic treatment. That is why I say that Government ought to see that the people really get an adequate return for the large expenditure incurred on establishments. In the Western countries,

there is a public opinion and the conduct of public officers will always come before the lime light. But here, the permanent establishment of the State is controlled by Government and Government alone and the common people are nowhere.

In these circumstances, it is quite necessary that superfluous establishments should be curtailed and the people should have an adequate return for the establishment charges incurred by Government solely in the interests of the people. The policy of retrenchment will be of no avail unless it is carried out in the light of the principles above inculcated.

Mr. Abbas Khan.—I wish only to add that there are many high salaried officers and that it is necessary to see that they render adequate service for the pay they get.

SUBJECT No. 2.

Revival of transaction in Taluk Treasuries.

Mr. A. Naraniengar, Hassan Taluk.

Mr. A. Naraniengar.—People are put to considerable inconvenience by the abolition of Taluk Treasuries in the District Head-quarters. Too much work is thrown on the District Treasuries and very often moneys brought for remittance by village officers are not received promptly with the result that many people have lost the money which they had to keep in hotels and other places. The old system may therefore be revived.

Mr. S. Venkatesiah.—There are many conveniences also in the present system. For instance, under the old system, the Patels and Shanbhogs who went to the Treasuries for purposes of remittances had to wait for a number of days before they could remit the money, with the result that these men had to stop in these places for a number of days leaving their homes. By giving an increased establishment to the District Treasuries, remittances can be made more prmoptly and many irregularities that are common in the Taluk Treasuries such as, for example, keeping open the cash account for several days after the last day of the official year can be obviated by direct dealings with the District Treasury. In these circumstances, the present system of remitting the money at the District Treasuries may be continued.

Dewan.—The matter is under favourable consideration.

SUBJECT No. 3.

Delivery of *Tappals* in villages.

Messrs. Nadig Bhaskara Rao, Nadig Lakshmana Rao and Nadig Seetharamappa, Sorab Taluk.

Mr. Bhaskara Rao.—Arrangements may be made for the delivery of *tappals* in villages twice a week instead of only once as at present.

Mr. Hoskoppa Krishna Rao.—Government have generously heard our representations and made